

## Seattle Police Email Community Newsletter

September 7, 2011



Dear Community Friends,

We hope you enjoyed the summer months. We wanted to provide you with a few quick notes.

### **Burglary**

As with previous years, we noted an increase in residential burglary through open windows and unlocked doors for the period of June 1<sup>st</sup> – September 1<sup>st</sup>. This is the prevailing trend during the warm weather months and it held true again this year. In some neighborhoods, "no forced entry" burglaries, meaning no force was applied to gain entry into the home and there was no apparent damage to doors and windows, accounted for 45% of all the burglaries. Other areas of the South and Southwest Precincts fared better at 24%, but most areas experienced a non-force burglary rate of 30-33%. This means that in roughly one in three of all reported burglaries, the burglar came through an unlocked or open window, or an unlocked door.

**What you can do about this.** Burglary is often a crime of opportunity. If you remove the opportunity, you reduce the chances of the crime. As simple as it sounds, any time you leave the home, even if it's just for a few minutes, close and lock all doors and windows, even those windows that are above ground level.

### **Reporting Crime**

In reading incident reports, I note how often a witness will report seeing a suspicious vehicle or an unknown person in the area at the time of the burglary. Sometimes they call it in to 911 right away; other times, they report not calling 911 because they felt they were overreacting. In many cases where the call to 911 was made, officers were able to get in to the area locate a suspicious person and an associated vehicle, which led to connections with other area burglaries. Without the alert neighbor taking action and making the call, officers would not have been in the area, nor would they be able to identify the suspicious people or the vehicle, because they would not have had descriptions of either.

**It's okay to use 911.** It's not just for life threatening emergencies; it is for reporting crime in progress or suspicious activity. If you see something that doesn't seem right, and you get an unsettled feeling about it, it's probably suspicious. You know what's suspicious in your neighborhood better than an officer does because you live there; the officer doesn't. If you have a doubt as to whether something merits a 911 call, call 911. We'd rather get the call, come and investigate and find out it's no big deal than to not get the call and find out later that it was a big deal.

Officers are dispatched to areas where the calls for service demand their presence. Otherwise, officers wouldn't know there is a concern in that area. It is your information and descriptions that give them the reason to stop someone and talk to them. Put simply: if you don't tell us, we don't know; if you don't call us, we don't show.

### **People Wearing Safety Vests**

One trend we've seen over the past few months is a number of people wearing the orange and yellow safety vests (sometimes the orange & yellow pants, as well), even though they are not associated with any safety, road or work crew. You may also notice joggers and bikers wearing the safety vests to increase their visibility to others. We want to bring this to your attention so that you can be aware that some individuals wearing these garments have no official status as part of a safety crew.

### **What to do**

If someone comes to your home claiming to be a safety worker or part of a work crew, or claiming to be from a public utility, cable or phone company, ask to see their picture ID. Every employee of a municipality, public utility or telecom provider should have a valid picture ID - showing who they represent - on their person. If they don't, send them away and report them immediately to 911.

### **South Precinct Picnic - September 10, 2011, 1 – 4 pm**

There will be a community picnic at the South Precinct on Saturday, September 10, 2011, from 1pm – 4pm. Sponsored by the Seattle Police Foundation with support from local businesses, Picnic at the Precinct provides an opportunity for the business and residential communities to come together and enjoy a day of celebration with their local officers as well as from Harbor Patrol, the Mounted Patrol, Bomb Disposal unit (and their robot) and others. Police and local community groups will staff resource tables to provide you with crime prevention and neighborhood safety information. Enjoy free food, music, dance performances, and children's activities.

Until next time, Take Care And Stay Safe!

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